366 for good fortune and health. Prevent all bloodshed in this market.
782 We also fear those who are quarrelsome and those who talk too much, those who provoke disorder." The chicken is the first victim to be sacrificed, and if the offering is accepted, it must have first fallen on its back and only then turned over face downward (this means that the gods of the place will protect the naba and the persons who will frequent the market). Next the goat or sheep is killed.

The new market is opened immediately after the sacrifice. Those present buy the women's fritters. Ordinarily, Mossi markets
[443] are held every three days. The news travels rapidly that such-and-such a village has a market, and thus the business of the market gradually grows.

366 Collection of fees. It is only later on, one or even two years after the installation of his new market and when [79] it is successful, that the canton chief appoints a yaguinga (grandson, or, more
[601] accurately in native terms, a sister's son (nephew)or son's son (grandson), of the naba or of a member of his family) or a Gourounsi captive to act as collector of market fees. (We shall list below the various fees for a place in the market as they were collected for the benefit of the naba before the arrival of the French.)

366 Transfer of the market. Upon the death of a naba (the emperor, a vassal chief, or even the chief of the village where the market is held), the market is temporarily set up in another place. In large towns, such as Ouagadougou, for example, there may be as many markets as there are sections. These temporary markets are called kim'dagha (market of the kimsé, that is, of the deceased).

366 When a new naba has been named, the market is moved back
782 to its former site and the reinstallation calls for new sacrifices of fowl and livestock. That was why in 1897, when the market at Ouagadougou was being re-established, the emperor asked the captain who was in command of the post to provide a cow to be sacrificed along with a sheep and a rooster which he himself provided.

366 Likewise, whenever a hyena has run through the market (its
825 presence is discovered either by the tracks left by the animal or by consulting the soothsayers), just as happens when a naba dies, the
787 market must be moved elsewhere for a few days. It is believed that if [80] a brawl should occur after a hyena had passed through the market, there would certainly be a death.

226 most difficult to ford. Each watercourse, or more exactly each pond,
[423 belongs to a naba and bears a special name, so no river has the same name
55A] name all along its course. During the dry season the lelek /bed?/ of the watercourses is usually dry. Here and there are to be found ponds of varying depth where the cattle is watered. These ponds are where the natives fish. They wait until the water level subsides to knee height, for otherwise fishing would be too difficult.

226 The fishing gear is as crude as the hunting gear. There is a small
227 net held open by three sticks forming a triangle and crossed by a tough stick that is held in the hand, quite similar to the spoon-nets we use to gather shrimp. Above all a sort of wicker trap is used, conical in shape, open at the base and closed at the tip with a movable lid. This trap sometimes contains a second one made of very flexible sticks that are attached to the base of the first one. The two traps thus have a common base, but the second one opens within the first. The fish enters the trap and is held by the sticks of the smaller cone, which close in as the fish tries to get out. The fisherman removes the trap from the water or leaves it sunk in the mud, opens the lid, plunges in his hand and removes the fish, which is confined and easy to seize. The fisherman then puts it in a net or in a leather bag.

226 On a set date the owner of the pond offers sacrifices to the crocodiles
825 so they will not bite anybody. This is why the naba of Koupéla, before he fishes in his pond, must sacrifice a black goat and a chicken. No one may kill a crocodile while fishing, or the naba will die before the year is over. Was not a crocodile killed in his father's pond on
[789] the very year when he died? Before they go fishing, the natives make charms by burning roots and tree bark inside their traps. If the charm is good, the fish will rush headlong into the net or trap.

226 The fishermen gather at one end of the pond. They stand in a row across the water and move slowly forward while dipping their nets and traps over and over again. All the fish caught are put in bags or tossed to friends who stand on the shore, but, as during the hunt, the naba takes an ample share and seizes the finest specimens. The ponds hold mostly silurids anyway, which like mud and retain its odor and taste even when cooked. The Volta rivers, on the other hand, contain more abundant and more varied fish. /52/ When the natives have crossed and recrossed the pond several times, only small fry remain, and everyone goes home glad to have a little fish for the sauce and especially to have escaped the teeth of the crocodiles, for in spite of

776 kikiriga, in turn, are to ward off anything that might harm the crop,
241 birds, caterpillars, thieves, and the like, and to fill with millet a granary of the size drawn on the ground with ashes at the time of harvest. If the kikiriga has properly carried out his duties, he gets another chicken when all the grain has been gathered in a heap.
776 Pregnant women are under the protection of a special kikiriga, and
[843] small children have one of their own to ward off illness and danger. Do we not say ourselves that a special Providence watches over the very young?

776 Actually, everyone has his kikiriga. Some have an evil one, and
828 those are the people who quarrel with everybody, the ones who are never successful, whose livestock dies, for the kikirsi often kill the
[577] goats, sheep, and horses that die of illness. Other people have a good kikiriga, and for them everything goes well; they were born under a lucky star. These are the engaging, sweet, good-natured people
[513] who get rich and who have many children. When a Mossi lies down to sleep in his hut, he rests his head on a stone or a small mound of beaten earth. This is where his kikiriga dwells, and from time to time, especially when he feels the need for special protection, he
[782] sacrifices a guinea hen or sometimes even a goat, with the understanding that the spirit will chase away all fellow spirits who might want to harm him and will avert all illness and all danger from his path.

776 /83/ The tangandé is a spirit who has the shape of an animal and
778 who is regarded as the protector of a village. The term is also ex-
825 tended to designate the spirit's place of residence, usually the sacred grove but sometimes a mere stone or even an open space. The tangandé may be a crocodile, a boa, a leopard, a turtle, a deer, a hare, etc. The animal is sacred to the whole village and may not be killed in the sacred grove, but it may be killed elsewhere, even a short distance from the thicket.

776 The tangandé is a guardian spirit because it protects men and sends
755 its servants to accompany the village people on trips when they request it to do so. The natives incessantly turn to it for protection, and the sorcerers incessantly refer those who consult them to the tangandé to obtain cures and to request the release of souls held captive
776 by evil sorcerers. When someone dies, sacrifices are made to the
782 tangandé with requests to protect the survivors and to ward off illness.
[774] When souls leave the body during sleep, they often go to the sacred grove. Anyone may sacrifice to the tangandé and in the tangandé.

821 Water in general and rain in particular are a blessing in this sun-
825 scorched land. Crocodiles are reputed to attract water to their dwelling-
place. To kill a crocodile may not necessarily amount to homicide,
but it amounts at least to drying out a watercourse or pond, for the
crocodiles will leave the place and the water will leave with them.
If rain is too long delayed, the crop will not have time to ripen; if
it falls too heavily, especially at the beginning and at the end of the
winter season, weeds will choke the millet, or the flowers will fall
before the fruit is formed.

789 Rain is, therefore, desired or feared according to the circumstances,
829 and the power to make rain and to ward it off devolves upon the naba,
who rules on the life and death of his subjects. In truth every power-
ful man is believed to possess this power, and how often they requested
me to make rain! Is it not true that Whites can do anything? They
are related to the ancestral spirits, their color proves it! Do they not
come from the land of water? Did they not emerge from the water?
In spite of my assertions that God alone can make rain, that one must
pray for it, their skeptical smiles made it plain that they did not be-
lieve me.

789 The naba has the charm, the talisman, to draw rain. All he need
do when a storm threatens is to take from his hut a certain jar full of
certain roots and fill it with water to overflowing. On the other hand,
if he wishes to ward off rain, he burns another kind of root, and the
wind carries the smoke in the direction where the naba wishes to send
the clouds; or else he hangs a cow's or horse's tail to a stick by a thread,
and the wind tosses it, thus driving the clouds away. This is why the
naba sends one of his men to market when the rainy season draws
near, to gather karite fruit from each woman there, because the pits
are used to make the charm and must be obtained in this fashion. If
a person other than the naba has tried to make rain and failed, he
attributes his failure to someone more powerful than himself; if the
naba fails, no one says anything about it, or else it is said that the
naba did not really wish to attract or to ward off the rain.

821 Every storm is accompanied by lightning, which often kills people
in this land of violent thunderstorms. Its effects are attributed to an
evil spirit, to an enemy who can send lightning if he knows the proper
tim, or to God Himself. Lightning strikes thieves and murderers; it is
a punishment. If it does not kill the thief himself, it kills the proceeds
of the theft, the stolen horse or sheep. It never kills a person without
reason.

224 435 At Kombisiguiri, as we have just seen, there are 10 elephant hunters out of about 70 chiefs of compounds. Among the latter there are also some 20 men who hunt other animals, but they are cultivators who hunt on the side. They seek buffalo. When they kill one, they sell the meat to the village that stands nearest to the spot of the kill for 35,000 cowries. They also hunt the koba antelope, whose meat is worth from 20,000 cowries, the striped deer worth 6,500, the pig deer worth 5,000, the wart hog worth 10,000. They also hunt hares, bustards, guinea fowl, partridges, turtle-doves, etc.

224 262 The Mossi do not hunt monkeys and do not eat them. /495/ Actually, there are very few in Mossi territory, except for the red-haired monkeys who are great lovers of millet and maize.

224 825 778 The Mossi do not hunt crocodiles because the latter are held sacred. If one were to kill a crocodile, one would become ill, one's head would swell and one's teeth would fall out. Snakes, on the other hand, are killed and eaten, but in Mossi territory proper there are few large ones (pythons, boas) because the climate is not sufficiently humid. They are more numerous in Boussansé and Gourounsi lands.

226 Fishing is less important than hunting among the Mossi, for the simple reason that the land, with its low rainfall, only has muddy ponds during the dry season (on this subject, see our Introduction /not translated/). Thus, not only do the Mossi lack professional fishermen, but the villages do not even undertake collective fishing during the dry season (with the exception of some southern localities, in Kombisiguiri for example). Only children attempt to catch the mudfish which are always present in large quantities in small ponds, even when they are nearly dry.

222 Gathering, on the other hand, plays the same role among the Mossi as among the other Sudanese Blacks, and we shall study it here in some detail, since we have only described it in broad outline so far.

222 137 The tree most widespread throughout Mossi territory, and which grows wild, is the karité. Its leaves are a pleasant green, and it is somewhat similar to our Normandy apple tree. Its bark is whitish and made of small juxtaposed quadrilaterals. It is the karité which

137 They are 7 or 8 meters tall, 10 meters at most, and their huge fruits are bunched in clusters of five or six rather than forty or fifty.

There are no rônier in the Mossi bush itself, but there are some 137 in every Mossi village. They originated from seeds tossed at random 222 after eating the fruits, or from an ancient cultivation of the tree. The rônier, therefore, is not a natural product of Mossi territory and should not, in all exactitude, be listed among the gathering crops. On the other hand, can it be listed with the cultivated crops at the present day, and can we call cultivation the act of tossing seeds to the ground in order to get rid of them? No matter what the truth may be, the Mossi eat /503/ the fruits of their rônier but do not extract any palm wine. As we have just said, they use the fibers of the leaves for their wickerwork.

137 While the rônier occur in Mossi territory, there are, on the other hand, no palm-oil trees and palmier-ban /?/. Those begin to appear only in Gourounsi territory, to the south of the Mossi.

222 We have just reviewed the most important gathering trees in 137 the area, but the Mossi bush contains many others, less important to be sure but nevertheless useful, which we shall now mention.

First, there is the ganra or ganga (sounsoun in Mandé, diomba in Peuhl and Sarakolé). This is the medlar tree of West Africa. In appearance, it is a big tree similar to the karité but even bigger, with a thicker and more powerful trunk.

The fruit is a medlar, smaller than the European one. When green, it has the same acrid taste and numbs the mouth. When ripe, it is such as we eat it in Europe. The natives begin to eat it during the rainy season and consume it until January.

386 The wives of Bambara blacksmiths make a varnish for pots and 171 canari with the bark of the sounsoun. As for the wives of Mossi blacksmiths, they prefer to use for this purpose the bark of two trees we shall mention later, the nobora and the sibi. In Gourounsi territory, on the other hand, the women who make pottery pluck the medlars while still green and crush them. They add water, thus making a sort of varnish which they use on the canari after they are fired. The ganra is called kano in Nounouma, kakano in Kassouna, kalo in Sissala, and ganra or ganga in Nankana and Mossi.

● 825 Let us add that among the Mossi, as in all of West Africa, the ganra tree is closely related to fetishistic superstitions, and will be mentioned again in a later chapter on religion.

782 dolo and millet flour. There was no set time for this. The flesh
778 of the sacrificed animals devolved to the sacrificer, the head of Sékou.

At present day sacred groves are still to be found in various Mossi villages. Thus, for example, there are three at Kabayoro, two of which belong to individuals and one to the village. The Earth chief /Tr.: Tengsoba/ of Kabayoro offers sacrifices to the village grove whenever the bara says so.

The Mossi also make sacrifices to the hills.

At Sabtinga, about 17 kilometers northwest of Ouagadougou, there is a rise in the ground called Tantiibo where the Moro Naba used to go once a year with the Baloum Naba, many chiefs and people at the time when the weather begins to grow cold. He ordered a beef, a chicken, millet flour, and a gourd of dolo to be taken along, and they were handed over to the head of the quarter where the hillock stood. This chief performed the sacrifice and begged the piece of ground to grant good health to the Moro Naba. Only
[839] the Moro Naba, the Balou, the sacred people (eunuchs), and the soroné were present at the sacrifice, Other people who had come to Sabtinga remained in the village, whence the Moro Naba set out on foot to the spot of the sacrifice.

At Kombé-Padanda, a small hillock located in a /589/ Ouagadougou quarter, the same sacrifice was offered in the same fashion and at the same time of year.

326 Let us add that when Mossi blacksmiths go and smelt iron ore
782 in the bush, they kill chickens and offer millet flour on the spot where they extract the ore. The sacrifice is offered to the spirits of the hill, as well as to the Earth and to Naba Ouondé.

778 Sacrifices are made to watercourses as well as to hills, either
782 at fishing time or whenever the bara indicate that a certain stream requires a certain sacrifice.

825 As far as crocodiles are concerned, some of them are held
262 sacred by the Mossi. As for snakes, they are killed and usually eaten, but not everyone eats them. Some people abstain.

778 As for the Earth, the Moro Naba had sheep, chickens, millet
782 flour, and dolo handed over to the Baloum Naba through eunuchs several times a year, whenever a bara told him to do so. The Baloum Naba handed these gifts in person to the chief of Ouagadougou,

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IV

ADMINISTRATION

642 631 [825] [769] The Mossi always looked to their rulers, especially to the Mogho Nanamse, the Dimdamba, and the Kombemba, to determine administrative policies and to pronounce on all relevant issues. All foreigners who requested information were told, "You must talk to the chief."[1] The Mossi believed that men cannot live without chiefs, and insisted that even animals have chiefs. Mossi rulers were therefore expected to ensure internal tranquillity in times of peace and to protect their subjects and territories in times of war. The expectation that they would also provide impartial judgment is best expressed by a dictum of the Ouagadougou people: "The truth is at Ouagadougou." Finally, Mossi chiefs were held responsible for inducing the ancestors to bring health and prosperity to their subjects. To this end, they supervised and participated in rituals to their ancestors and encouraged the people in every territory, district, village, and compound to do likewise. In return, the people paid homage and allegiance to their chiefs and provided them with the goods and services they needed to support the administrative process.

643 631 642 175 The nature of the administrative relationship between the Mogho Naba of Ouagadougou, the rulers of Yatenga, Fada-N'Gourma, and Tenkodogo, and the autonomous Dimdamba was not clear to the early visitors to Mossi country, and remains a matter of controversy. Two conflicting principles were always at work: seniority with respect to the nam and claims of close descent from Ouedraogo and Oubri on the one hand, and relative political strength or military power on the other. The stronger a ruler, the less he deferred to his lineal seniors. He might even claim a supremacy over them that came close to a claim of seniority. When Barth visited the Sudan in 1853, he was told that the Mossi country was "split into a number of small principalities, almost totally independent of each other, and paying only slight homage to the principality of Woghodogo." Barth reports, however, that the Dim of Boussouma was "probably the most powerful of the Mossi chiefs at the . . . time, especially with regard to cavalry." Similarly,

12:Skinner E-4,5 (1955-1957) 1962
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taxes in their markets. The French abolished both of these offices when they took over the country, because they looked upon them as purely exploitative rather than regulatory agents. But like so many other Mossi political institutions which the French have "abolished," the Kos Naga and Raga Naba persist in many of the districts, and perhaps even in such large centers as Wagadougou. These officials persist because one of the basic assumptions of the Mossi is that everything must have a "chief." They believe that even the animals in the bush have chiefs, and if men, too, did not have chiefs then social life would be chaos. Thus, in the rural areas many or most district chiefs have retained their market officials even though the roles of these officials have become highly attenuated and so secretive that their existence is often denied.

Taxes collected at the market places played an important part in supporting the traditional political hierarchy of the Mossi people. The Kos Naba collected 250 cowries in taxes for every beef cattle slaughtered at the market and took their humps and gave them to a palace official called the Nemdo Naba (meat chief) for distribution in the royal household. He also collected 250 cowries on every cow sold there, but did not usually tax goats and sheep. In lieu of this he occasionally took a head or two of these animals from each herd that passed through the market and sent them to the palace kitchens. Donkeys were also taxed at the rate of 200 cowries per head sold in the market. Horses sold to the nobility were not taxed, but those exported were taxed about 300 cowries.

The Raga Naba collected the taxes on other commodities sold at market. Cotton weavers paid him taxes according to the size of their bolts of cloth, and cotton producers paid as much as 20 cowries on especially large sales of their raw produce. The tailors and dyers paid no fixed tax on their wares, but were asked to send clothing to the palace. Every donkey- or ox-load of salt which entered the market place was assessed a tax of 300 cowries. The smiths were not taxed in cowries, but had to supply the wives of the Moro Naba with hoes and the palace personnel with arrowheads, spearpoints and iron clubs. The jewelers also sent bracelets as presents to the ruler. There were no fixed taxes on cereals, vegetables and cooked food sold at market, but each day the Raga Naba, accompanied by several pages or retainers carrying baskets, went from vendor to vendor taking several calabashfuls of their produce for use in the palace. In addition, the vendors of cooked food had to feed the young grooms of the Moro Naba who were not regularly fed by the palace household. The beer sellers, too, while they were not assessed taxes, contributed a good percentage of their beverage to palace and market personnel who demanded the